

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /063 R

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P 062349Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFORPN

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S SAN FRANCISCO REMARKS ON PANAMA

1. FOLLOWING IS OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS  
ON PANAMA.

QUOTE. MR. BATES: I HAVE QUESTIONS ON WHAT IS OUR LATIN  
AMERICAN POLICY - WHICH IS A GENERAL QUESTION - AND THEN,  
SPECIFICALLY: DO WE CONTINUE TO PLAN TO GIVE THE PANAMA  
CANAL AWAY?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I COULD MAKE A GREAT HEADLINE BY  
SAYING "YES." (LAUGHTER.)

LET ME EXPLAIN WHAT IS AT ISSUE IN THE PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATION. OUR CONCERN WITH THE PANAMA CANAL ISSUE IS TO  
AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS DRAWN  
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INTO A CONFRONTATION WITH ALL OF LATIN AMERICA, IN WHICH

AMERICAN MILITARY FORCE WILL HAVE TO BE USED TO FIGHT A GUERRILLA WAR IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE AS LONG AS AN HONORABLE ALTERNATIVE PRESENTS ITSELF. WHAT WE ARE NEGOTIATING NOW - AND, INCIDENTALLY, WITH THE AGREEMENT OF ALL OF THE AGENCIES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT - IS AN ARRANGEMENT IN WHICH THE DEFENSE OF THE PANAMA CANAL WILL

BE JOINTLY EXERCISED BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME - FOR A VERY EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME - WHILE THE OPERATION OF THE CANAL IS TURNED OVER DURING A SHORTER PERIOD OF TIME.

BUT THE ESSENTIAL AMERICAN DEFENSE INTERESTS CAN BE MAINTAINED, IN OUR VIEW, THROUGH THIS COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENT WHILE AVOIDING A SITUATION IN WHICH THE PANAMA CANAL BECOMES A RALLYING GROUND OF ALL OF LATIN AMERICAN RESENTMENT AGAINST THE UNITED STATES. WE WILL NOT MAKE AN AGREEMENT IN WHICH OUR ESSENTIAL INTERESTS IN FREE TRANSIT THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL ARE JEOPARDIZED, BUT WE WILL MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO SEE WHETHER WE CAN MAKE A STABLER ARRANGEMENT. ALL OF THIS WILL HAVE TO BE PUT BEFORE THE CONGRESS AND WILL BE EXPLORED IN THE GREATEST DETAIL WITH THE CONGRESS WHILE WE'RE NEGOTIATING IT, AND THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE LIKELY TO TAKE SOME PERIOD OF TIME.

END QUOTE

2. AS YOU WILL NOTE FROM ABOVE, VOA VERSION OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS WAS INACCURATE. SISCO

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## Message Attributes

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